

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) Method for increasing plant seed yield, comprising transforming a plant with ~~introducing and expressing~~ an isolated nucleic acid encoding a metallothionein protein in said plant and selecting for increased expression in said plant of ~~[[a]]~~the nucleic acid compared to plants of the same species lacking ~~[[said]]~~a genetic modification as an indication of a plant with increased yield,

wherein said nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of

(i) the nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1;

(ii) a nucleic acid sequence encoding protein of SEQ ID NO:2; and

(iii) a nucleic acid sequence encoding a metallothionein protein which is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 2.

Claim 2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim ~~[[2]]~~1, wherein said increased seed yield comprises increased total number of seeds and/or increased total weight of seeds, when compared to plants of the same species lacking said genetic modification.

4. (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim ~~[[2]]~~1, wherein said increased seed yield further comprises an increase in biomass.

Claim 5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 1, wherein said nucleic acid encoding a metallothionein protein encodes a type 2 metallothionein.

7. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 6, wherein said nucleic acid is derived from a plant.

Claim 8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) Method according to any one of Claims 1, 6 or [[5 to]], wherein expression of said nucleic acid encoding a metallothionein is driven by a constitutive promoter.

10. (Previously Presented) Plants obtainable by a method according to Claim 1.

Claims 11-24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently Amended) Method for increasing plant seed yield, comprising ~~transforming a plant with~~ introducing and expressing an isolated nucleic acid encoding a metallothionein protein in said plant and selecting for increased plant seed yield compared to plants of the same species lacking ~~[[said]]~~ a genetic modification.

Claim 26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim ~~[[26]]~~ 25, wherein said increased yield comprises increased total number of seeds and/or increased total weight of seeds, when compared to plants of the same species lacking said genetic modification

28. (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim ~~[[26]]~~ 25, wherein said increased yield further comprises an increase in biomass.

Claim 29. (Canceled)

30. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 25, wherein said nucleic acid encoding a metallothionein protein encodes a type 2 metallothionein.

31. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 30, wherein said nucleic acid is derived from a plant.

32. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 25, wherein said nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of

- (i) the nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1;
- (ii) a nucleic acid sequence encoding protein of SEQ ID NO:2; and
- (iii) a nucleic acid sequence encoding a metallothionein protein which is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 2.

33. (Currently Amended) Method according to any one of Claims ~~[[29]]~~30 to 32, wherein expression of said nucleic acid encoding a metallothionein is driven by a constitutive promoter.

34. (Previously Presented) Plants obtainable by a method according to Claim 25.